

# HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

Hackney's **OTHER** Newspaper

## CLIMB DOWN!

The defiant stand taken by the young people who are members of the Clapton Youth Centre looks as though it has won them a victory in their struggle against the Inner London Education Authority youth officers. A deputation of twelve people - members and both part-time and full-time staff - went to a meeting at County Hall on 10 December with senior ILEA officers and councillors. There the officers agreed to come to an open meeting at the Youth Centre in January, when they will hear the views of members of the Youth Centre and the wider community.

The dispute centred around the work done by the part-time Tutor in Charge, A. Samuel. ILEA were refusing to upgrade him to full-time staff. They were also trying to regrade other members of staff, take resources from the Youth Centre and trying to turn the Centre into a Youth Club, which would mean paying all the staff less money.

ILEA's plans were condemned by the Youth Centre members and they formed a defence committee, which mobilised support from other youth organisations and from Hackney community groups. Because a large number of the Youth Centre's membership is black, there was extensive support from ethnic minority groups both inside and outside the borough.

The deputation which went to meet ILEA at County Hall

### ILEA agree to meet youth

was not very impressed with the way in which they were received. "Their attitude was very rude," one of them told HPP. "They kept saying that they understand the problems of the black community, but they don't. None of them could think of any specific way in which they were meeting the needs of black people."

#### CONCESSION

The meeting started with a long wrangle about the Youth Centre wanting to tape-record the meeting. ILEA were very upset that anyone should think that the minutes of the meeting were not a true record of what was said. One officer even said that the Youth Centre might try and edit the tape to their advantage! However in the end, they relented and went on to discuss the issues in the case.

ILEA has now agreed to leave all the resources as



Youth V Bureaucracy :

Preparing Placards at Clapton Youth Centre.

they are, for the time being. They have also said that Sam's position will be discussed publicly when he has responded to the offer which will be made to him. (Sam has since said that he is willing to discuss the issue as soon as possible, as the affair is now one of national and international importance, with coverage in foreign newspapers.)

They also agreed to come to the Youth Centre and meet the members. "That is the main concession," HPP was told. "It's practically unheard of

for senior ILEA officers to come to a Youth Centre or Club and talk to the young people there."

In the meantime, it is important to give as much support to the Youth Centre as possible. The public meeting will be held on Sat 16 January at 2pm. If you want to help then contact the Youth Centre. You should also write to your GLC councillor, asking her or him to put pressure on ILEA. Clapton Youth Centre is at Laura Place, E5. (986 7248).

#### INSIDE STORY

### UNDER ATTACK!



**What Heseltine's Bill could mean to education**

## Making changes

You may have noticed that this issue of HPP covers two months, December and January. As we explained in our last issue, the number of people involved in the monthly production of the paper had dwindled to a small handful, who were getting increasingly dispirited.

However, we are happy to report that, following a successful public meeting we are planning to continue regular monthly publication and, we hope, turn HPP into a better, more interesting, more exciting read. In order to do this - and to get us through the difficult holiday season, when editorial attention tends to be diverted by mince pies, alcoholic beverages and old films on telly, this issue will cover two months. Normal service will be resumed with the February issue.

We are planning to alter the way in which we decide what stories and issues to cover each month by holding an open editorial meeting every month. This will generally be held in Centerprise, as this was felt to be more accessible and better known than our office in Grayling Road. The planning meeting for the February issue will be held in Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8, on Tuesday 12 January at 8pm. Please come along if you want to contribute to HPP in any way.

## Met carve-up

The Metropolitan Hospital in Kingsland Road has been empty since 1975. During that time nothing has actually been done with the site. There has been some talk about possible uses. In 1980, Hackney Council bought the site from the Area Health Authority and installed security personnel at a rumoured cost of some £30,000 per year. This money is paid out just to keep an empty building empty and this same money is the core of the argument which the Council uses for wanting to get the building off its hands.

Now a fairy godfather has appeared on the scene and offered half a million pounds to remove this white elephant, to the apparent

relief of large parts of the Council, it seems. But there is considerable disquiet amongst Hackney's community groups that this offer may not be all it seems, and will not offer the kind of facilities sorely needed by community groups.

#### Fairy Godfather

The fairy godfather is Michael Murray, of the Federation of Working Communities. There are various similar schemes run by Murray and his former associates inside and outside London. The most notable is the Clerkenwell Close workshops, with whom Murray was once involved.



Michael Murray wants to turn the old hospital into a Metropolitan College of Craftsmen, which would be small one or two person workspaces for people making craft goods. He also wants to turn the Nurses Home into accommodation

for the workspace users.

Various Council committees have met these proposals with three decisions in principle. But no decision in practice has yet been made, simply because no detailed information about

Contd. on back page.



## LETTERS

splash-  
ing out?

Dear HPP,

There are grumblings in the community about this proposal for a leisure pool. The luxurious new pool will be stage two of the Britannia Centre down in Shore-ditch. A lot of people seem to think it is wrong to spend so much money on this wonderful new scheme.

I think most of this grumbling comes from the hearties. People who love to swim up and down in nearly empty pools for hours on end because they feel better afterwards. They think these boring old, rectangular swimming pools should be supported, re-invested in, and people encouraged to use them because they are good for you. Well they are clearly wrong. If they are so obviously wonderful why aren't they full of people doing good to themselves on a Saturday morning.

Now leisure pools are a truly wonderful invention. Children can play in the water for ages and ages. They are not forced to swim from side to side in an authoritarian and militaristic fashion. They can jump, play, and bounce in the waves. Learning comes through play and many of the hearties could learn a lot from learning to play a little.

I heard one person say that the problem with leisure pools was that they were full of kids. Of course they are because they have a great time there! At the moment they have to be driven to Muswell Hill or to Caledonian Road to find a place to enjoy themselves.

Yes it is a period of recession and money could always be spent in a thousand ways but give Hackney kids some fun because they aren't going to be on The Greek Islands or the Costa Brava for the holidays.

Yours sincerely,

Diana D'Iver

If you have any thoughts about whether Hackney Council should take the plunge and build a tropical paradise for the local population, why not express them through our letters column. Send your letters to: Hackney People's Press, 47a Grayling Road, N16.

## CONSPIRACY

## MP in moderate plot

I can now reveal, writes J. Arthur Shitbag, political editor of the Daily Mag, that a group of dedicated self-styled "moderates" have been holding meetings in secret devoted to saving the country we love from falling into the hands of the dreaded Commissar Benn.

This band of loonies, who will stop at nothing to impose their diktat on an unwilling people, are led in the run-down East London borough of Hackney by sitting MP and wealthy solicitor Stanley Clinton-Davis and Councillor-poet Bob Masters.

My specially developed

X-ray vision has enabled me to see from my haunt in El Vino's Wine Bar in Fleet Street all the goings on in Labour's dingy Dalston Lane HQ. Thus I can now tell you that Stanley and Bob's "small group", as they are accustomed to call it, is dedicated to changing the nature of British society as we know it. Once there was honey still for tea, Fulham in the First Division, beer at two bob a pint and nights out at the Hackney Empire. Now there is nothing except grey tower blocks, a cold

East wind blowing in from the Russian steppes, desperation on every street corner and queues for bread and scrape at the Ridley Road tea stall. Once there was contentment and hope, now there is nothing except greed and despair. What has happened to the Hackney Labour Party we used to know and love? The party that brought you "Sir" Lou and "Lady" Sherman, "Arthur" Super, Denis Trim, Martin Ottolangui. Is it now to be dominated by the loony moderates like Mr Clinton-Davis and Mr

Masters, who plot in secret in smoke-filled back rooms to change the very nature of democratic politics?

The answer as I see it must be yes, or no. And for Christmas I'd like a large bottle of Auld Glenmorangie single malt and an application form for the SDP. I feel that it is time that we stood up for all that we hold most dear. Honey for tea, good old Fulham in the First division, beer at one and nine a pint, nights out down the old Hackney Empire burble, burble, burble.

INSIDE  
LEFTNO IN-ROADS  
FOR  
LOCAL SDP

Since the Social Democrats are all about "an idea that has found its time" and "breaking the mould" of politics in Britain we might have expected them to sweep all before them in their drive to power. But in Hackney in early December they suffered a setback which, if analysed, has interesting repercussions on their chances of doing well in next year's round of Council's elections.

The winner in the Westdown Ward by-election was easily the Get Stuffed Party. With only a 30% turn out, no-one could really say that she or he had scored a massive hit at the polls, but it still meant that Labour could heave a sigh of relief at holding a seat in one of their safest wards.

The real losers were the Tories whose votes nearly all went to the SDP (or SDP, as they like to be known). The SDP candidate gained 6% of the Tory vote in 1978, while Labour's share declined by 17%.

If that result was to be repeated in the May council elections next year the SDP would win four wards in North Hackney - New River, Brownwood, Springfield and Northfields - and Homerton in Hackney Central. The Liberals would probably pick up a couple of wards in Shoreditch but it would still mean that the Labour Party would control the Council.

It is also worth pointing out that Westdown is the first by-election in London that the SDP have failed to win from Labour since the Alliance was formed in the summer. They have won seats in Lambeth, Southwark, Harrow, Waltham Forest and Islington. The result in

Bishops Ward in Lambeth was particularly interesting. Here was a safe Labour seat, similar in many ways to Westdown, yet Labour lost it to the SDP and Liberals. Yet a week after Shirley Williams swept through Crosby Roy Evans failed to pick up Westdown. Is this the forward march of the SDP halted? Hardly. Next May, there will be a torrent of gush urging the electors to reject the politics of Red Ted Knight and, perhaps, Red John Kotz.

It could be, however, that the SDP will look at their resources and decide that Hackney is most unlikely to go their way. They would probably be happy to take Islington, Lambeth and a load of other boroughs. But even if Hackney stays Labour the result across London could well be a repeat of the 1968 debacle, when virtually every London borough, including Hackney, went Tory. And it is quite obvious, looking at the SDP, that there wouldn't be much difference between the Tories of 1968, and the so-called Social Democrats of 1982.



## FREE FORM

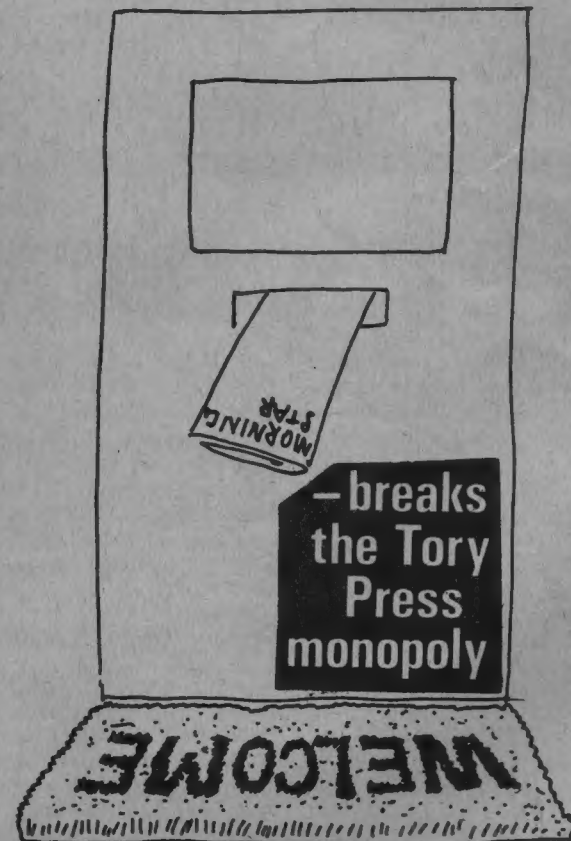
"Free Form", the community arts project based in Hackney, are running two new workshops in January for any local groups who are interested in developing their creative work. The courses are specifically designed to introduce Free Form's particular arts approach to anyone doing group creative work in playschemes, community centres, and unemployment projects. The courses will take place on 17-21 and 26-31 January and the fee is £80. Despite the high cost, Free Form hope that people will be able to raise the money either from their local authority or Regional Arts

Association, or their employer.

One local group who have already taken part in a Free Form course are the Hackney Play Association. Amanda Hopkinson of HPA commented that when on the course they were expected to "exploit" all Free Form's knowledge and experience and that "with the amount that Free Form were putting in, no-one felt bored or tired until it was all over. Then I could have slept for 24 hours!"

For further details contact Sarah Mudd, Free Form, 38 Dalston Lane, London E8 3AZ Tel 01 249 3394

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Founded on the belief that radio can be interesting, innovative and fun to listen to London Open Radio (LOR) is campaigning to establish a non-commercial, participant controlled radio station.

It's difficult to dispute LOR's assertion that many groups and individuals are not catered for by the existing output of radio. They plan to provide facilities for people to make their own programmes. Opposed to censorship, any tapes sent in will be judged on quality, but "in the event of material possibly causing offence a clear warning will precede its broadcast."

LOR plans to finance itself primarily through subscriptions - a system

which both operates and works successfully in many other countries, including Canada, United States, Italy and Australia. The powers that be in this country are still reluctant to end the BBC/IBA duopoly of the airwaves.

An application to run a test transmission in October was turned down by the Home Secretary, William Whitelaw, but undeterred by this setback LOR is currently looking for new offices large enough to accommodate a studio. And they are keen to hear from people who are interested in putting programmes together - beginners welcome!

Anyone interested in finding out more about LOR can contact them at: 2 Warwick Crescent, London W2 Tel: 01-289 7163/4



## Relay magazine

Relay is a new quarterly magazine offering a forum for groups and individuals involved, or interested, in developing new forms of radio - imaginative, accountable, democratic.

The first issue outlines the 'third force' challenge to the BBC/IBA duopoly of the airwaves and with the IBA re-advertisement of London franchises - LBC in 1982, Capital in 1983 - is

keen to get people involved in the campaign. In addition it covers a whole range of community radio activities in an interesting and entertaining style.

The cost for 4 issues (inc. postage):  
£2.00 for individuals  
£5.00 for institutions  
(cheques/orders to RELAY)  
Address: Box 12  
2a St. Paul's Rd  
London N1

# OPEN HOUSE

## LATCHKEY KIDS

### GET BETTER DEAL

So-called 'Latchkey Kids' in the Newington Green area are getting a better deal, thanks to the efforts of a local community centre. The Factory Community Centre in Matthias Road is running an 'Out of School' project which caters for children whose parents either have to leave early in the morning or return home late at night. They are currently running a 'Breakfast Club' every morning and a 'After School Club' on Wednesday and Friday evenings. In the morning they simply provide breakfast but in the evening the children can take part in a number of activities. The 'After School Club' is run in conjunction with Newington Green Junior School which operates a playscheme on the other nights of the week and in addition to the two groups, which are primarily for the junior school age group, The Factory also runs junior and senior clubs for older children of secondary school age.

## Good Response

The response to the scheme, which has been running for nearly four years, has been very good. The 'Breakfast Club' caters for between 20 and 30 children whilst the 'After School Club' regularly attracts 50 or more. Parents, particularly mothers, see the scheme as a "blessing" as it enables them to go out to work and the kids themselves love the freedom and excitement that the project offers them.

## Problems

However, like so many such community activities up and

down the country, the 'Out of School' project suffers from financial problems. Funding is not available for the Xmas holidays, unlike Easter and the Summer. Ross Davies, one of the workers on the project believes that this is due to the myth that many such schemes are of the adventure playground variety and that local authorities feel that children shouldn't be encouraged outdoors in winter.

## Nothing at Xmas

"And when I asked about the Xmas holidays" she said, "I was told that 'nothing happens' and as for half term, nobody ever turned up!" BASSAC is acting as an umbrella organisation for other 'Out of School' projects nationally and they are currently lobbying support for a debate in the Commons in the New Year.

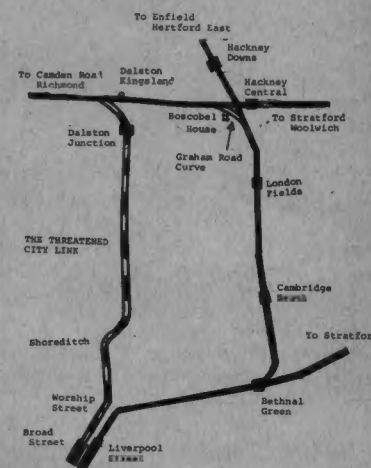
## Agreement

An ironic final note to the problem of 'latchkey kids' is that in a recent debate in the Commons, the unusual situation of a Tory minister agreeing with a Labour MP occurred. Alf Dubbs (Labour-Battersea South) opened the debate by suggesting that the two-and-a-half million children between the ages of 5 and 10 whose mothers worked had no real 'out of school' provision. He went on to add that if nothing was done soon then women would be forced out of work and into claiming supplementary benefit. Geoffrey Finsberg from the DHSS recognised the problem that families could not always solve the problem of child care unaided and promised further debate on the issue.

# CITY LINK CUT

## - OFFICIAL !

On November 24 British Rail posted up public notices at Broad Street Station notifying users of their plans to close the station and the section of track between Broad Street and Worship Street. As reported in last month's HPP this is the first stage of a withering away of the "City Link", that part of the North London Line between Dalston Junction and Broad Street. Users of the line and their representatives have six weeks in which to object to this scheme to the Transport Users Consultative Committee for London, 3/4 Great Marlborough St., London W1, a watchdog body who make a recommendation to the Minister of Transport on British Rail's plans.



## Campaign

Hackney Public Transport Action Committee and the North London Line Committee have started a campaign to get as many users as possible to object to the inconvenience to them of the termination at Worship Street. Clearly, few people will gain any benefit from this move as an additional journey will be needed to get them to their City destinations. Complaints should be sent to the TUCC as soon as possible. For further information on the closure telephone John Sanderson at Hackney Public Transport Action Committee on 739 5137.

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## Heseltine's Bill threatens London education

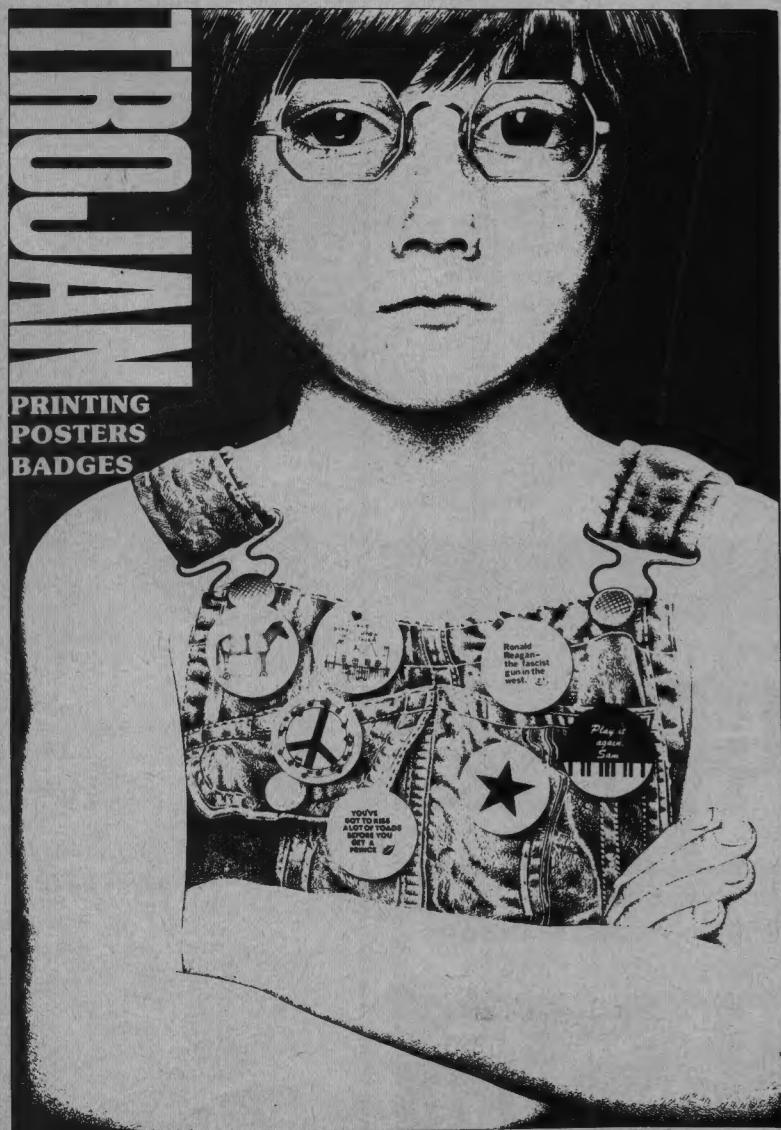
# UNDER ATTACK!




ILEA Trade Unions lead off

Photo: Tony Mac'lin

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47a Grayling Road, Stoke Newington, London N16. Tel: 809 2889

When over 15,000 people take to the streets in protest you can safely assume that something is drastically wrong somewhere. When they do it on a freezing cold day in early December, many of them bringing their children along, the situation must be critical. And it is.

The Local Government Finance Bill that Michael Heseltine is trying to force through Parliament directly attacks education in London, long considered as having some of the highest standards in the country. On the surface the Bill appears to attack all local authorities but when seen in the context of continued attacks upon London, against the GLC and last year's campaign to disband ILEA, the target it is aimed at becomes clear - our education system!

This year the Government took away £125 million of the annual grant from ILEA and in order to maintain standards ILEA were forced to recoup the money with rate increases. According to Government figures, ILEA is currently 'over-spending' by some £96 million in the current year 1981-82 simply maintaining the level of services and not expanding or improving anything. Heseltine is looking for cuts of at least £100 million next year. By means of the new Bill, the Government would be in a position to force local authorities into reducing services. The Bill would shift the balance of the rates in favour of industry and commerce, placing the burden of rate increases upon householders. What the Bill points to is local control being removed from the community and being given to Whitehall who can then dictate the standards of local services such as education. But what would proposed cuts of £100 million mean to London's education system?

ILEA is 'top of the

league' when it comes to expenditure per pupil, an argument used in the last campaign to disband ILEA.

One of the main targets for cuts would be teaching staff. ILEA staff/pupil ratios are some of the best in the country but if cut back to the national average that could mean nearly 5,000 redundancies. However, this would only save £44 million, less than half of Heseltine's target and the cut does not take into account any redundancy payments. So where to now?

Imagine ILEA as a department store with Michael Heseltine, presiding over a 'closing down sale', shouting "Everything must go!" and you wouldn't be far wrong. According to the law, education authorities have a statutory obligation to provide education for the 5-16 age group. Therefore everything else is threatened with massive staff redundancies and closures in nursery, special, and adult education.

## Nursery Education

In 1972, ILEA set targets of nursery provision for 80% of all four year olds and 60% of all three year olds. In 1981 the nursery provision includes 32 nursery schools and 425 nursery classes. Two out of every three children starting at an ILEA primary school have had some form of nursery education and with the number of primary school entrants falling, suitable accommodation is being converted for nursery provision to help counter lack of facilities in some of the more deprived areas of London. If Heseltine's Bill goes through and all nursery education is scrapped then £18 million could be saved. But this would involve a total of 503 staff redundancies and 116 students being discharged not to mention untold damage to thousands of children and their families, with women once again facing the brunt of the cuts.

## Adult Education

Each year ILEA runs over 17,000 classes in some 8,000 subjects which are attended by over a quarter of a million Londoners. Most students pay only £15 for a standard course but an ever increasing number of students pay the concess- ionary rate of £1 for any

number of causes because the are either jobless or pensioners.

Over 20 adult education institutes offer special courses in literacy, numeracy as well as household and care skills. ILEA hopes to spend some £25 million this year on adult education and whilst this is only 3% of its budget, at a national level ILEA provides one quart of the country's total adult education provision! Courses such as literacy are necessary and vital in our multi-racial society but they and untold other 'cultural' activities are at stake if adult education goes. This would also mean a lost of over 2,000 adult education lecturers plus numerous support staff and it wouldn't even be half of what Heseltine is after.

## Community Educ

The numerous youth centres and playschemes operated by ILEA are also under threat and over 1,500 play centre, youth club and support staff could be faced with redundancy.

## Special Education

Nationally, one in five children need some form of 'special' education but in inner city areas this ratio increases to nearly one in four. Nearly 9,000 pupils attend the 112 ILEA special schools and a further 2,000 attend special classes in ordinary schools. Pupils of all disabilities from the physically handicapped to the educationally sub-normal are catered for, with many being encouraged to attend classes in ordinary schools so that they are not isolated from the community. In addition, many other education authorities send their pupils to ILEA schools. Generally, ILEA's special education facilities service thousands of children helping them and their families. Courses are both vocational and recreational but all special education helps those in society who have difficulty in coping with huge problems, become members of the community and not lonely and isolated. Heseltine wants this to stop.





SPELLING IT OUT

Photo: Tony Macklin

## Further Education

With rising unemployment, thousands of young people are turning to education for training in the hope that better qualifications may lead to that elusive job. Heseltine's Bill would cause massive reductions in staff with thousands made redundant in Further Education Colleges, Teacher Training Colleges and Polytechnics.

## Others threatened

● ILEA's Careers' Service though appearing to be rather a bad joke in these times of rising youth employment, handles 65,000 school leavers and students each year and is already the largest in the country with over 200 full-time staff. It could totally disappear.

● Student grants last year went to nearly 18,000 London pupils for further study. Some 4,000 were given discretionary awards and this year ILEA is looking to give more than

£9 million in discretionary awards alone, which go mainly to lower level or 'vocational' courses. Our open education system could become something only the rich can afford.

● Thousands of ILEA school-children last year took part in music, drama and arts courses; 3,000 in a week have free instrumental tuition alone. ILEA supports numerous schemes by which theatre is performed in schools and London school children filled over 100,000 seats in London's theatres, cinemas, operas, and ballets last year. All forms of 'artistic' activity could be cut from the school curriculum.

● All school meals and school milk face the axe with over 5,000 redundancies in canteen staff, supervisors, drivers, porters, and other staff.

All these possible cuts in expenditure that Michael Heseltine is looking for amount to a lot more than 22,000 redundancies - as if that wasn't enough. What is worse is that vital local services that local people

vote for in council elections can be attacked from outside. Central Government can deny the right of a decent education system that local people demand by simply going over their heads. Education will continue as it has to by law, but all the 'special' areas that Londoners see as essential are to be deemed 'expedient' by this new legislation. Education is not simply a matter of learning the three R's between the ages of 5 and 16 but a far more complex business of catering for people's needs: mothers who wish to work or young people who wish to go on to further study or older people who wish to catch up on what they missed in earlier life. The cut of £100 million in ILEA's budget is less than a quarter of the increase that the Chancellor recently gave to defence spending. The slogan goes "Jobs not Bombs". Should it not become "Education not Bombs"?

Acknowledgements to:  
ILEA  
ILTA NEWS  
NATFHE

# Help for mentally handicapped

## Campaign to start in new year

A public campaign is to be mounted in the new year to improve provision for the mentally handicapped in the Borough. This initiative has come about following two well-attended meetings called by the Hackney MHA Community Care Workshop.

Better provision was needed for the entire age range. For kids, this meant baby clinics, play groups and schools. For adults, something more than the two inadequately equipped and staffed day training centres which can not cope with the demand for places. An increasing number of young adults have to be left at home all the time - a situation which may fit in with government policy but one which is stressful to the individuals and families concerned. In the past, there has been criticism that many social workers have not been prepared to

fill this void and offer the sustained well-informed support that is needed.

## Asylums

Also of concern to the meetings was the large number of Hackney mentally ill people sent to hospitals - and in particular the poorly off nineteenth century type asylums - outside the Borough. The feeling was that the campaign should involve itself with getting well-designed accommodation established for them in Hackney.

## Steering Committee

A Steering Committee has been set up to get the campaign going. If you would like to come along to its next meeting (in January), contact Joy Vollmer at 210, Kingsland Road, E2. Tel: 739 6308.

# HACKNEY CO-OP COLUMN

More people are employed in workers' co-ops this year - at a time when jobs generally are being lost. ICOM - Industrial Common Ownership Movement - reports that 150 new jobs have been created in London co-ops; in Hackney the number of co-ops has risen from one to eight.

The co-ops between them cover a wide range of services and industries, from building, printing and booksell-

ing, wholefood, acting agencies to transport. Hackney's co-ops include Sheba, the feminist publisher, Trojan Printing Services and the Hackney Builders Co-op.

If you would like to know more about these co-ops, you can obtain a leaflet listing them, called "Use your local co-op", price 50p + 20p p&p from ICOM, 107/111 Stockwell Road, London SW9.

## Bootstrap

Another local organisation, Bootstrap Enterprises, has just celebrated its first year in the premises it shares with Brass Tacks in Ashwin Street at Dalston Junction.

Bootstrap was set up to create jobs in an area with high unemployment. It does this in two ways. It runs training workshops for local unqualified people to give them a better chance of finding a job. Linked to the training is the possibility of actually getting a job at the end of it. Training is not to a fixed scheme: it is

adapted to the pace and needs of whoever is being trained.

Bootstrap also sets up and supports workshops for small groups who are ready to start commercial operations on a co-operative basis. Bootstrap provides the premises, advice on marketing and accounting, information on finance if needed and general support and encouragement. At the moment there are four workshops: machine knitting, jewellery making, bicycle repairs and typing. Twenty-three people are involved, four of them skilled



## TIME TO BE BOLD poems by LOTTE MOOS

Perhaps it is to be expected that a book of poetry published in Hackney in 1981 should reflect the state of the local community and the problems its people face. Lotte Moos does this admirably with poems that we can all relate to, even those of us who would not normally consider themselves interested in poetry. Far too often "official" poetry as taught in schools has nothing to do with our everyday lives, turning many people off poetry for years, if not forever.

"Time to be Bold" is a varied and refreshing collection with something for all, many of the poems are admittedly bleak and familiar tales about poverty, the police, mental illness, racial discrimination, nuclear power etc. "In a hard winter" for instance, deals with the plight of the elderly trying to keep warm on inadequate benefit rates:

Sons and daughters of  
this wealthy nation  
Have to measure their un-  
treasured life in hypo-  
therms  
Of no-gas, no-paraffin,  
nor anything that burns-  
It costs money to be old  
- It costs money not to  
die of cold

Bleak, yes, but as Lotte Moos herself says, "If I didn't live in Hackney but on a lonely moor, I might have concentrated more on moor-hens."

Apart from the social comment and political pieces there are many others, some evocative like "Lost Summer" others which manage to come through with a message of hope and joy, and some in a more obscure vein which are open to interpretation. But perhaps the most enjoyable quality of Lotte Moos is her ability to combine a serious message with a sense of humour in such a way that it is fun to read, without the point of the poem being lost. "Times for Sale" about nudity and the popular press is one example, as is the following about the current political situation:

"At last a political poem!"

There were these two Shim-  
Shams

Locked in a fight  
The one shinned sham  
The other shammed sham  
And between their two maws  
The poor little fish  
-Not a chance!

But then came another Shim-  
Sham

To join in the fray  
It was shinning the sham  
AND shamming the sham  
And the poor little fish  
Between the three maws  
Got lost

Fish of the sea  
Unite

If you can

"Time to be Bold" is published by Centerprise Trust Ltd. with financial assistance from Hackney Writers Workshop and is available at Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, London E8 for £1.20 (add 40p postage and packing for mail order).

# CLIMB ABOARD!

The pantomime season takes on a distinctively nautical air this year in Hackney, so shiver your timbers, hoist up your mainsail - and don't forget your lifejacket! Chats Palace takes to the high seas with their Christmas show *Bluebeard the Barbary Ghost*, while the Theatre Royal Stratford is performing *Sinbad the Sailor*. Other pantos around the borough include *The Tinder Box* at the New Half Moon and at Hoxton Hall there is *Snow White & the 4? 3? Dwarves*.

### CHATS PALACE

This year's Christmas Show, 'Bluebeard the Barbary Ghost', is the fifth at Chats Palace. It promises to be as unique and extraordinary an event as the previous four.

The work done throughout the year at Chats plays an important part in the creation of the Christmas Show. Alongside a regular programme of music, music hall and theatre entertainment is a wide range of children's and adult's workshops. These include a children's film animation evening, prop and set construction, playscheme

construction for local adults and children - have been focussing on this show. There is a commitment to team work, so all those involved in the production can participate to the full.

'Bluebeard the Barbary Ghost' is an epic adventure story. Jemima, the heroine, leaves her husband holding the baby as she sets out to sail the high seas of the Spanish Main. Storms, conspiracies and the mysterious appearances of Bluebeard, the legendary pirate, will hold the audience gripped with suspense throughout the show.



CAST REHEARSING CHAT'S CHRISTMAS SHOW

projects in dance and drama, silk screen and photography courses. One of the main projects has been the formation of the Chats Palace Arkestra from last year's Christmas Show, which holds regular music sessions at Chats and also plays at venues throughout the East End.

The drawing together of all the initiatives, energies and activities within the local community culminates in the creation of the Christmas Show. From the middle of October workshops at Chats - on performance, dance, music, prop and set

Come down to Brooksby's Wharf to buy your ticket for the voyage of a lifetime aboard the HMS Chatspaniola. The show opens Tuesday 15 December at 8pm and runs Tuesdays to Saturdays until 16 January. (Excluding Xmas Day and Boxing Day.) Matinee performances 2.30pm Saturdays. One extra performance on Monday 11 January. For all you landlubbers, Chats Palace can be sighted at 42-44 Brooksby's Walk, Homerton E9. Phone 985 6878 for details of ticket prices and to book your seats.

### NEW HALF MOON THEATRE

The Half Moon's contribution to the festive season is an adaptation of Hans Christian Anderson's *The Tinder Box*, a magical pantomime about a greedy king, a soldier who falls in love with his daughter and a wicked witch who craves for the soldier's magical tinder box. An enchanting story full of songs and fun. And don't forget to hiss the witch!

The *Tinder Box* runs from 14 December until 9 January. From 14-26 December the show runs Mondays to Saturdays at 2pm and 7pm; and from 28 December to 9 January at 2pm. (No performance Xmas Day.)

The Half Moon is at 213 Mile End Road. Box Office: 790 4000.

### HOXTON HALL

For this year's festivities Hoxton Hall present:

*Snow White and the 4? 3? Dwarves*, an original version of the story for all the family.

Performances are on the 17, 18, 19, 28, 29, 30 December at 8pm, and on the 19, 29, 30 December there will also be a matinee show at 2.30pm.

Tickets: £1.50 adults, 40p unwaged and children, 30p pensioners.

### THEATRE ROYAL, STRATFORD EAST

When *Sinbad the Sailor* opens on 11 December at the Theatre Royal it will be financially the most successful panto in the theatre's illustrious history. The show, which has already sold out the first three weeks of its run is scheduled to sell out its entire run by the end of the Christmas break.

The show stars David Yip, known to millions of TV viewers as John Ho, 'The Chinese Detective' and Julie Dawn Cole of the BBC TV series 'Angels'.

'Sinbad' tells the story of Sinbad's voyage to destroy a wicked witch (played by Toni Palmer) and rescue the Princess Yasmin from her evil clutches. On the way, he is attacked by pirates, sings a few songs, is nearly eaten by an enormous giant, and fights off an attack by the savage Roc - a huge, man-eating bird. Needless to say, he eventually wins through in the end, with the assistance of his intrepid companions.

The show runs from 11 December to 30 January. For further information phone the box office on 534 0310.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS AND THE GLC.

## POETS IN PRINT

### WORKING MEN

Working men discuss  
football teams,  
Who won, who lost,  
who's just cruising.  
When whatever  
team you support,  
Your whole side is  
losing.

### A CENTURY OF PLANNING

This is the 20th Century  
Packaged, Perfect, Computer-  
ized  
And if you would -  
Just let me write the program  
(Such irrational, resistance  
from behind)

We might be.  
Package Perfect  
Graphic Designed.

### WAITING FOR THE RESURRECTION ON THE MORNING AFTER ARMAGEDDON

Born of whispers,  
This eroded landscape  
has  
No argument with  
Time.  
The morning -  
Over Urban deserts  
and  
The Subways to  
Nowhere,  
Is  
Endlessly and patiently,  
Waiting,  
While sunlight spills  
on  
The Perfect Site, for  
A Spa Hotel.

Edward Castle



# HCND



## FUTURE PLANS

Hackney CND sent five delegates to the recent national Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament conference. They reported back that one of the major emphases of the conference was the tremendous

work that had to be done at grass roots level. This was where the main recent successes of CND had come from, and Hackney CND intend to continue their work in this area. The petition

which is supposed to be taken round every household in Hackney is slowly progressing, but much more help is needed with this. If you can spare some time then please contact HCND.

With paper membership of over 500 but an active core of only about 50, many members of HCND feel that the structures could be more decentralised. Thus there will be discussion of how best to introduce this in the New Year, possibly through a system of ward contacts.

The next meeting of HCND will be on 4 January, at 8pm in Dalston Library.

HCND also want ideas for a play for their Theatre Group. If you would like to help then get in touch with John Burrows, 254 5862.

HCND can be contacted via Box 27 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

### HCND CHRISTMAS CARDS 1981

blank inside so they can be used for new-year greetings.



Both designs in red+white - with envelope. 12p each or 10 for £1 - mixed packs available at meetings or from Andrew Haig: 18 Graham Road E8-249-6232 or Donald Bason 36b Geldeston Rd. E5-806-4664

# Play design competition

When people are pressed to think about mobile play facilities, they will talk vaguely perhaps of a "bus painted up for the kids" or one of those "balloon things" or, if they are lucky enough to live in Islington, "that lorry with all the planks and wotnot". This last remark refers to the Islington Play Lorry, a three ton truck converted to a mobile adventure playground. Resembling a giant liquorice allsort on wheels this vehicle has boldly penetrated areas where no playworker has gone before, and in its five year life must have visited just about every estate in Islington. It provides an imaginative and eye-catching playspace for local children deprived of play facilities. The staff of four are also able to run trips in the project's minibus, hold indoor and outdoor craft sessions and generally provide a stimulating adult presence for the kids. The project also seeks to encourage community interest in play, a difficult task at the best of times.

I am an ex-worker with this project and it seems a useful model to follow, if on more modest scales. Mobile play facilities, of whatever description, can

get to areas of need effectively and quickly.

A neighbourhood may have to wait ages to get an adventure playground while mobile play provision can make a rapid response to demand.

Obviously, the funding is not now available to set up big projects like the Play Lorry, but it is with the same basic principles in mind that the Hackney Play Association is now running a mobile play equipment design competition. By inviting entries from community-based groups it seeks to draw children and adults together on an enterprise that will reap benefits for those communities. The designs submitted will be judged by a panel of experts, that is, professionals from the world of play and the kids and adults who have entered. All the winning designs will be constructed in early 1982, where possible on the sites which have submitted the winning entries, although the equipment will be bookable by other groups once built. A grand play festival is planned for the summer using the equipment.

As for the actual designs...well, people's imaginations can do the work. One idea already suggested is a transportable aerial runway kit - hopefully for use in

parks as the thought of kids whizzing down on wires from various Hackney tower blocks causes some alarm. An inflatable is another suggestion. Anything that looks as if it might be good fun to build and use will be considered. There might not be money for play lorry projects all over the place, but smaller scale equipment, designed and built locally, could be a good substitute.

All enquiries to: Dave Walters, Hackney Play Association, 380 Old Street, LONDON EC1.

Dave Walters

for that  
perfect gift  
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an **HPP**  
subscription

see p. 8!!



# ATTACKED BY POLICE

Yet another instance of local police brutality against a black family has led the Hackney Black Peoples Association to call for a Day of Action on Wednesday 16 December (to be held after this issue of HPP goes to press).

Mrs Knight is a single parent who lives with her three daughters in a self-contained flat. After an argument between her family and those in the basement flat a fight ensued. The police were called, and spoke to the basement family. Then Mrs Knight was dragged out of her flat by three policemen. When she protested she and her 19 and 13 year old daughters were arrested. The youngest daughter, aged 6, was left to fend for herself.

All were assaulted and taken to Stoke Newington Police Station, where they were held, without warm clothing, in a cold cell. The 6 year old was brought to the police station. Mrs Knight was not told this.

Mrs Knight received injuries which needed hospital treatment, including a cut on her face which needed stitches. Both her daughters were violently sick while in the cells

and had to be treated by a police doctor. They were subjected to continual racist abuse.

Then they were charged with assaulting the police and breach of the peace. They were told that if they pleaded guilty then they would be only fined £25. In order to get out of the police station, Mrs Knight signed a statement made up by the police. She did not read it, nor was it read out to her.

## Ordered

After they were released the Knights contacted a solicitor and complained to Scotland Yard. Then they were ordered back to Stoke Newington Police Station and there Mrs Knight and her 19 year old daughter were charged with grievous bodily harm. The daughter was held in custody overnight.

A public meeting was held on 26 November to protest at the treatment of the Knight family. It called for a picket of the Magistrates Court and a Day of Action on 16 December.



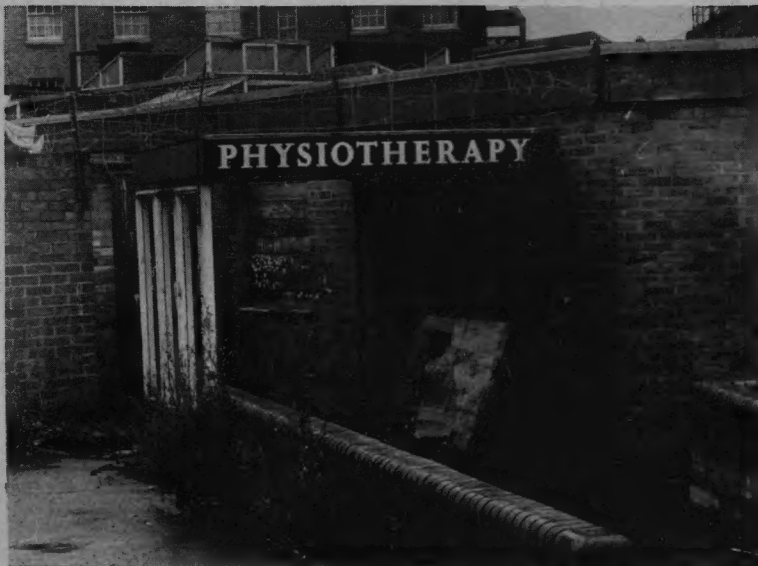
# MET CARVE-UP

Contd. from page 1.

finances, management and development of the site has been given to the Council.

At the moment there are two groups in the old Nurses Home who wish to stay there. These are the 136 Community Nursery and the Hackney Short Life Users Group, who utilise Council short-life housing. Their position in the Nurses home is uncertain, despite countless verbal assurances that their tenancies are secure. They have asked the Council for written assurances but nothing has yet been forthcoming.

Many people in Hackney are very concerned about the Murray plans. Hackney Community Action, the umbrella group for all Hackney's community groups, wrote to all



A Case Of Manipulation?

Photo: Tony Macklin

the relevant Council committees, asking about the security of possible users, who would not have tenancies but licences from the Federation. They also asked how far the Council's policies for equal opportunities would be implemented and about the possibilities for communal creche and canteen facilities. There was no reply from any Council department to this letter.

Various groups have now come together to form yet another umbrella group, the Metropolitan Hospital Action Group. This has now written to the Labour Group on the Council asking very crucial questions, which remain unanswered.

## ALTERNATIVES

In the meantime, the Chairperson of the Council's Economic Development Committee, Brian Marsh, asked two local organisations concerned with developing co-operative enterprises in Hackney to come up with alternative proposals for the site. These are Hackney Co-op Developments and Bootstraps, both of which are part of the Action Group. The outline proposal that they put forward was for a scheme to undertake the integrated development of the local economy, matching local resources to local needs. The plan is applicable for the use of any large site, to develop industrial property, assist existing and new services, provide comprehensive and relevant training, generate finance for investment, provide social facilities and business services. It would take into account and build on local skills and the

multi-ethnic nature of the community.

This proposal was looked at by the Economic Development Committee. After an hour's discussion the members agreed unanimously to allow all interested parties to work out their proposals and put them forward by 22 February. Then a final decision in practice would be made.

## CO-OPERATION

The following night at the Policy Committee meeting this decision was overturned. In principle, the Murray scheme was again agreed.

As a result of this confusion the Action Group has decided to try and send a deputation to the full Council meeting on 23 December to try and encourage the Council to take the matter seriously.

The Action Group want the Council to allow more time for their proposals to be worked out. They think that this would be a great opportunity for the groups and

Council to work together. At the moment, the approval of the Murray plan means that the Council is washing its hands of its responsibility for the Met. Small community based groups simply do not have the resources to undertake plans for a major site like the Met. They need the support that the Council could give - and the scheme is much more likely to be successful with proper Council backing. It's about time that the Council did something to restore confidence to the community groups who feel that their proposals have been shunted backwards and forwards for too long.

# The pensioners' plea: Too cold for the old



On a cold and wintry day in November pensioners throughout the country demonstrated against the rising price of fuel and increases in standing charges for fuel meters. These increases are biting more and more into their diminishing pensions. In Hackney alone nearly 200 people turned up to the Town Hall to lobby support. Below we present some of the startling facts which made these pensioners take to the streets, and why for many old people this winter could be their last.

● Official figures for deaths from hypothermia in 1979 were 65,678.

● Two-thirds of all supplementary benefit claimants are pensioners (around 2 million); three-quarters receive a heating addition. Two million pensioners receive rent and rates rebates, but don't get any help with their fuel bills.

The Gas Corporation made £875 million pre-tax profits in the year 1979-80. The Government took £449m. of this as an interest-free loan. The recent gas levy Bill enables them to take another £1,300m. over the next three years.

● The Electricity Supply industry announced profits of £373m. last March AFTER paying £575m. in interest.

● In 1980 gas and electricity prices went up by 29%, whereas this November basic pensions increased by only 9% - less than the rate of inflation.

● During the winter 20% more pensioners and 40% more babies die due to inadequate heating.

Last year and this year pensions have not been increased to keep pace with inflation, whereas fuel prices are rising faster than inflation. This year a single pensioner is losing £1.05 a week and a married couple £2.50. The present Government's policy on energy is pricing people out of the market as they cannot afford to pay for essential heating. In 1980 nearly 100,000 homes were disconnected; in 1981 this figure has already risen to 120,000 and the worst of the year is not over yet. This situation is particularly bad in Hackney, where the LEB has one of the highest records for disconnections in the country. However, while energy is treated as a profitable commodity rather than an essential service, the sad fact is that many people, especially pensioners, are going to die this winter.

## HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

The open editorial meeting for the next issue of HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS will be held at Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High St, E8, at 8pm on Tuesday 12 January. If you would like to help write or produce the next issue then please come along.

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS is an alternative non-profit making monthly newspaper produced by an open group of people who live or work in Hackney. We publish the paper because we believe that Hackney needs an alternative to the commercial press to serve the real interests of its people. We have no editor and no shareholders and no one is paid by the paper.

HPP is your newspaper: anyone who lives or works in Hackney is welcome to come and help us. All decisions are made collectively.

HPP is sold through various newsagents and shops throughout Hackney. If you think that your newsagent would like to sell it, on sale or return then please contact us. And if you don't think that you can spare the time to become more involved, but you enjoy reading HPP and think more people should read it, then please get in touch if you are willing to sell a few copies to your friends or neighbours or at meetings.

- Take out a subscription to HPP and guarantee regular delivery! Just send a cheque/PO for £2.80 for one year's subscription to Hackney People's Press, 47a Grayling Road, N16.
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Printed and published by Hackney People's Press, 47a Grayling Road, London N16; tel 809 2889 (daytime messages) and 806 9211 (evenings and weekends).

## PETTY BUREAU

